

SERMON

Preach'd in the

Cathedral Church

NORWICH,

Upon *March* the 8th, 1704.

BEING

The Anniversary Day of Her Majesty's
Happy Inauguration.

BEFORE THE

*Right Worshipful the Mayor, Justices,
Sheriffs, Aldermen, &c. of that Her
Majesty's City.*

And Published at the Request of the
Court of Mayoralty.

By JOSEPH BRETT A.M.

Rector of the Parishes of St. Clements and St. Austins in Norwich.

NORWICH Printed, and Sold by the Widow Oliver in the
Cockey-Lane, in Norwich. 1704.

Norwich, At the Court of Mayoral-
ty held the 11th day of
March, 170³/₄.

Michael Beverly, *Esq;* Alder-
man William Blyth, and
Alderman Robert Bene are desired
to wait upon Mr. Brett, and request
him on behalf of this Court, that he
will be pleased to cause the Sermon
he Preached Wednesday last (being
the day of Her Majesty's Inaugura-
tion to the Crown) to be Printed.



Chappell

Proverbs XVI. $\pm$ 12. *the latter part of
the Verse,*

For the Throne is established in righteousness.

The whole Verse runs thus:

*It is an abomination to Kings to commit
wickedness, for the Throne is establish-
ed in righteousness.*

THE business of this days Solemnity being to bless and adore, to praise and magnify God Almighty's wonderful Goodness to our Nation, in placing our gracious Sovereign Queen ANN this day upon the Throne of her Ancestours, and to prosper, and prolong her Reign over us, I have thought that I can't better acquit my self of the duty now incumbent on me, than in directing you to the most proper, and indeed only means, to secure to our selves the continuance of those blessings, which we have already experienced, and those many more which we so justly promise our-selves, under her Majesty's Auspicious Reign, and Government; and that is, to be truly good, and pious. Religion is the only proper means, as to secure to us everlasting happiness

pineness in the world to come, so likewise all the peace and happiness, all the comforts and blessings of this life, both private, and publick. 'Tis by this Heavenly and Divine wisdom that *Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice*, 'tis this that brings *riches and honours, yea durable riches, and righteousness*. Her fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and her revenue than choice silver. She causeth those that love her to inherit substances, and she fills their treasures. In a word, there's scarce any blessedness which this wisdom does not bring along with it, as you heard in the first Lesson for this Morning Service.

This our Gracious Sovereign, whose Soul a true sense of Religion possesses, is so highly sensible of, that immediately upon her coming to the Throne, her first cares were by her Royal Proclamation, to discourage, and suppress all vice, and profaness, debauchery, and immorality, and whatever is contrary to godliness, humbly acknowledging, that the Divine Blessing, and Goodness on her self and us, is not to be expected, nor his assistance for our protection, and welfare to be hoped for, without a religious observance of Gods holy and righteous Laws. For which reason, I say, her first, and repeated cares have been to promote Religion and piety, and to discourage all manner of vice and wickedness, so that 'tis not wanting to her care, if *England* be not now a Theocracy, a Divine Empire, and if we do not see an image of Heaven in these fortunate Isles, in which nothing will be wanting if Religion, and piety be not. But we have not only her Commands, but which is much more effectual for this purpose, we have her Example also: and her Laws, and her Example seem with envy to dispute, which shall best establish vertue, and piety among us. Princes
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in some manner command all that they do, and forbid all which they do not, their example hath a secret, and ruling power which draws others after it. Their vices, and their vertues diffuse themselves in a state, they even perpetuate, and in some manner eternize themselves by imitation. As they can't commit Sin, which does not render them a long time guilty, and a thousand ways criminal, neither also have they any vertue which does not spring up in all places, which does not incessantly reproduce itself, and which does not pass into the hearts of infinite many persons eager to imitate them. So that 'tis always an unspeakable blessing of God for a Nation, to have a Sovereign, which not only gives no bad, but which also sets a good Example, and this, this is the happiness which if ever any people did, we now enjoy under the reign of our most gracious Queen.

Should I here pretend to display to you this great, and glorious example, should I set forth, and particularize the bright and glaring vertues that are most conspicuous in our Sovereign, in her steadfastness to her Religion, in her firmness to her duty, in her unshakeable constancy against all Temptations, in her sweetness of temper, in her wisdom, in her moderation, and in those many other Princely vertues which adorn her Royal Soul, I have in each of these, more than sufficient matter for a *Panegyrick*; and tho' I am not unsensible that such an undertaking might be grateful to many, yet with submission to better Judgments, I think it more proper for the Orator's *Rostra*, than the Divines Pulpit.

So that having given this due, tho' imperfect *Eulogy* of our gracious Sovereign, I shall proceed to what I have thought fit to make the subject of my following Discourse, and your Attention, *viz.* to endeavour

deavour to make you become good Christians, by which means I am sure you will be good Subjects.

If we be sensible, my Brethren, of the Blessings which we do, and may enjoy under the auspicious reign of our Sovereign: If we would have these Blessings continued to us, as we value the one, as we desire the other, let us make it our business to live holily, and vertuously, this is the undoubted way to make our selves an happy People, and firmly to settle, and establish the Throne of that Queen, which our Souls seem, and which I am sure they ought to delight in, for as the Wise man tells us in my Text, *The Throne is established in righteousness.*

At first sight the sense of the words seems to be this, that it is by the righteousness of Princes (and not of the People) that their Throne is established to them; which tho indeed in a great measure true, yet is not always so, as our Nation it self has given a sad instance of the contrary, in the Violent and Untimely End of that Righteous Martyred Sovereign of ours King Charles the First, in the last Century, whose Heroical Vertues have rendred him the Glory of His Country, the honour of that Church whereof he was the chiefest Member, the admiration of Christendom, and a Pattern for all Princes to imitate unto the end of the world.

But if we take the words of my Text in the other sense they bare, viz. That it is by the Righteousness of a People, or Nation, that the Throne of that Nation is established, it is universally true, and when it is at any time overturned, they are the People's sins that are the cause of it; and by this, we may account for the unhappy end of that before mentioned Righteous Prince, even in the very words of Scripture,

ture, for the sins of the people, and the iniquities of *Lam. 4. 13.*
the Priests, they shed the blood of that just one in the
midst of Jerusalem; and undoubtedly 'tis properly So-
lomon's meaning in my Text, that 'tis by the righte-
ousness of a People, that Princes Thrones are Esta-
blished; for more nearly to the Original, the words
should be Translated thus, *they are abominable to the*
King who do wickedly, because the Throne is established by
righteousness: So that the last words are assigned as a
reason, why the workers of wickedness are abomina-
ble to Kings, viz. because that it is by righteous-
ness that their Throne is to be established to them,
and consequently that they who do the contrary, use
the proper, and certain means to undermine, and over-
turn it.

To engage you therefore to the Practice of Religi-
on, and Righteousness, and to dissuade you from all
sin, and wickedness in general, my business shall be to
make good Solomon's Aphorism, or Proverb in my Text,
viz. *that the Throne is established by righteousness*; and
as my hopes are great that a sincere love of, and
a true concern for our Countries wellfare, are deep-
ly rooted in our hearts, and that we have with a true
fervency of Spirit, and ardency of Devotion sent up
our Prayers this Morning to the Throne of Grace for
her Majesty's Long, and Glorious Reign over us, and
that all our ardent Wishes and loud Acclamations for
the same, on this happy day of Her Inauguration are
in good earnest; I will shew you that the best way
to secure these things to our selves is by Piety, and
vertue, since it is by righteousness that the Throne is esta-
blished, i. e. that it is by a People's being truly Reli-
gious, that themselves and Prince are made Happy,
and Prosperous.

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And now this is what I shall make good, by shewing you

- I. That true Religion and Piety are the very foundation and basis of a People, and Prince's Happiness, and that sin does in it self directly tend to ruin it.
- II. That they do the same by vertue of their natural fruits, and consequences, and
- III. That it is so in Fact, that Princes, or people are happy, or miserable, as they obey, or disobey God, as they live vertuously, or wickedly.

Which Three Particulars I shall speak to with all the brevity I can, and then conclude with an Application of the whole to our selves.

I. That by a People's being truly Religious, themselves and Prince are made happy and prosperous, is evident from hence, because true Religion and Piety are the very foundation and basis of a people, and Prince's happiness, and that sin does in it self directly tend to Ruin it.

1. For true Religion and Piety, these I say are in themselves the foundation of, and do most greatly promote, and advance the happiness of a Prince and people.

If we take away Religion, and the Obligation which that lays upon us to Obedience, and Peace, and Justice, &c. there's nothing left which can have force enough

enough on man, to keep him in the observance of those things that make for Peace. If there's no God, the Religion of an Oath can't oblige the Conscience. If there's no Providence, no life after this, men can be no longer retained, or kept within the bounds of their Duty, by respect unto Heaven, and the great Governour of the World, but only by the fear of humane Punishments; and if they are powerful enough, or cunning enough, to put themselves out of a state of having any thing to answer before humane Tribunals, what should hinder them from attempting and daring to do whatever they list; Take away the sense of Religion, and of an Almighty Governour of the world, who now sees what we here do, and will another day call us to an account for it; and 'tis hard to conceive, when men have no other rule but their own will, and particular interest to guide themselves by, but that they would by degrees loose all sense of shame, but that they would cast off all distinction between vice and vertue, and would believe all that's possible for them, to be right and lawful, and here I do not see how any Societies could long subsist.

If it be said, that tho' the generality of men had no sense of God and Religion, yet the common Interest of Mankind might make them regard the Laws, looking upon Punishments, the Authority of Magistrates, and the Obedience of Subjects, as useful and necessary; I answer, that this usefulness and necessity would never long suffice to keep men from breaking all these bridles, if there were not other bridles, and curbs harder to break, which strengthens these, *i. e.* the fear of God, the checks of Conscience, and the dread of another world. Once more, take away all these, and all others

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would soon be found to be very much slackned and weakned, and consequently private men would be more exposed in their estates, in their honour, and in their life, and Magistrates themselves would set a thousand times less safe upon their Tribunals; all Allegiance that is not swayed by these, would soon be thrown off, and a dissolution of all States and Politics must necessarily ensue.

In short, most of the Duties of Religion are so absolutely necessary to the good order, quiet, and peace of Society, that the want of Religion makes us incapable of living in Society, and consequently there's no man who thinks, but must clearly see, that Religion is both the Foundation and Cement of every humane Society, that this alone can unite all the parts, and give firmness and solidity to the whole. So true is that of *Platarch*, *That a City might be as well built in the air, without any earth to stand upon, as a Commonwealth can be either constituted or preserved without the support of Religion.* All which sufficiently shews that Religion in it self is the foundation of a Prince's and People's happiness; which will farther appear by shewing on the contrary

2. That sin does in it self directly tend to a People's Ruine. It often by natural, and necessary causes produces many publick mischiefs; there's not indeed scarce any one sin, but what leads to disorder and confusion, and brings some damage to the Publick. Irreligion, and Profaness over-turn the very foundations of Society; they who fear not God, will not regard men; and those who swear commonly

ly, and rashly, will not stick to swear falsely, if it be to secure or advance their secular Interest. I might run over all sins in particular, and shew what an ill influence each hath, more or less, on Society, that they weaken the sinews, and strength, and must Ruin the best Constituted Government that is, or can be devised, where they are commonly, and constantly practised by the Members of it; such as Luxury, which eats out the Riches of a Nation; and idleness, which hinders its encrease; Covetousness, which debases the Spirits of a People; and Lust, which consumes their strength; Malice, which undermines; and Ambition, which over-turns a Government; and in general, there's no Vice but when it is predominant, has a fatal aspect upon a Kingdom, and forebodes evil to the State; whence 'tis evident that sin is a natural, and certain cause of the Calamities which befall a People, and whilst they continue sinful 'tis almost impossible for them to be happy. So God himself gives us to understand, when he so pathetically wished that his People *would fear him, that they would keep all his Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and their Children for ever.* Where God represents it as not possible for it to be well with them and their children, unless they lived in his fear, and in obedience to his Commands, that if they continued sinful and wicked, it were impossible for them to be happy. In a word, sin weakens the sinews of a Common-wealth, and then throws it down, so true is that observation of the Roman General *Scipio*, that it is impossible for any State, or City to be happy, *Stantibus moribus, ruentibus moribus*, be their Walls never so strong, if their Manners be decayed.

Deut. 5.
29.

Which being so, it is impossible that any Prince's Throne should be established, should be secure; or any People happy, whilst sin and wickedness abounds amongst them, and consequently that it is by righteousness only, that this can be effected. This from the nature of the thing, from Piety and Sin considered in themselves. But this is not all yet, farther.

II. Religion and Piety make a Prince and People happy, and sin and impiety tend to their Ruin by vertue of their own natural fruits, and consequences. To show this in each.

I. For Righteousness, or Religion, this exalts a Nation to the greatest Happiness 'tis capable of, and without this all other advantages are either useless, or pernicious to it. This puts the several parts of a Nation into such a course of Life and Conversation, as mutually conduces to the Peace, and Happiness, and Preservation of the whole. This is the Spring of all wise Counsels, and Conduct; and of all handsome, and worthy Designs, and Actions, which sets them a going smoothly, and chearfully. This makes Magistrates just and merciful, and inspires them with Wisdom, and Counsel, with integrity, and zeal for the Publick Good. This makes Subjects obedient *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake*. This begets, and nourishes Sobriety, and Courage in the Soldier, Religion being the Mother of Fortitude, and Valour; and Truth, and Justice, in the Tradesman, teaching him to do as he would be done by, and to give to every one his due. This promotes Industry in Mens Callings, which is the Nerves
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and Sinews of every Common-wealth. This disposes men to mind the Publick Good, and Honour of the Nation where they live, and prefer it before their own private interests. In a word, Religion is the only solid Foundation of a People's Strength, and Glory, in that it extirpates all those Lusts, which are the causes of enmity, and divisions, as Pride, Conceitedness, Self-will, Covetousness, Ambition, Self-love, Hatred, Revenge, and the like, *from whence, as St. James observes, come quarrellings and fightings:* and on the contrary it inspirits Men with all those good qualities, and dispositions that tend to Unity, Concord, and Agreement, which is the very life and soul of every Community.

These are some of the many natural effects and consequences of Religion, which tend to make a People happy; but there is one above all upon which their Happiness does depend, and that is, the singular blessing and favour of the Divine Providence, and this is what the Practice of Religion entitles them to, that recommends them to the Almighty's Protection, engages him to be on their side, and secures to them the constant succours and aid of his Divine Providence, of which there are so many Declarations and Promises in the Holy Scriptures so well known, that I need not trouble you with the recital of them; and surely *happy, thrice happy are the people that are in such a case, yea blessed must the people needs be who have the Lord for their God.*

And now from all this 'tis evident that if the fear of God, and love of Righteousness, and general practice of Religion does prevail among a People, they must necessarily be an happy Nation. So true is that of the wise Solomon, *Righteousness exalteth a*

Nation, Prov. 14.
31.

Nation, raiseth it to the highest degree of Prosperity and Glory, and establisheth it upon the sure, and lasting Foundations of Peace and Happiness. And this is also what will farther appear, by shewing on the contrary.

2. That sin and impiety do by their own natural fruits, and consequences, tend to the Ruin, and Destruction of a People and Nation. This is plain and evident enough to any one that hath been an observer of the effects, and consequences of humane Actions. *As righteousness exalteth a Nation*, so as the same Wise Man tells us, *sin is a reproach to any people*; it lays them low, were they never so high, and prosperous before. This blasts all their secular advantages, and defeats all the hopes the most promising Circumstances can raise them to. This infatuates their Counsels, weakens their Courage, rends their Unity and Concord, consumes their Wealth and Substance, debases their Esteem and Reputation, and in a word, disorders them in all their natural respects and dependencies. Be a People rich and wealthy, if they be wicked, they will soon foolishly waste and consume it, and 'tis besides what will invite Invasions, and render them a richer Prey. Be they strong and valiant, if wicked men can be so, and skilful in Arms, they will be preying upon one another, which will soon breed horrible Confusions and Tumults; and as to Peace, they must not pretend or think to enjoy that for any long time, no, *there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*; which is equally true in respect to the Peace and Tranquility of whole Nations, as to that of private Persons.

So that you may plainly perceive, that whilst Vice or Wickedness prevails in a Nation, 'tis a gross delusion to think it self well or secure; were it the best constituted Nation in the world, it would be impossible for it not to decay and languish under the malignant influence of an Epidemical wickedness, since when that comes once to get into the Bowels of a Nation, and to infect a People with its Contagion, and reign among them, they must, without any outward Enemy to attack them, soon unavoidably sink and perish, under the weight and persecution of their own Vices.

And this is enough to shew what a sad influence sin by its necessary effects, and consequences, must have to the Ruin, and Destruction of any People, or Nation; and yet all I have said is very imperfect, if I do not put you in mind farther, of another never failing effect, and that the most dreadful and fatal of all, that it hath to the same purpose, and that is, of provoking the anger, and bringing down the Judgments of a Righteous God upon them. *There is a God, doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth;* and the sins of any Nation do certainly subject it to his displeasure. He is no idle and unconcerned Spectatour of the Actions of Men; no, his careful Providence is extended even to the meanest thing which his Power hath created, and much more surely is it conversant about whole Kingdoms and Nations; and if he will not let sin go unpunished in private Persons, as he seldom does, but at one time or other is sure to *make their sins to find them out;* how much less will he do it when sin abounds in a Nation, and like a great Flood carries all before it;

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In such a case God must take Vengeance of it, for this reason, because bodies Politick and communities of Men, can be Rewarded or Punished as such, in this World only, since they are not made to be Immortal, but end with this World, this Life is the only place wherein God can reckon with them, for in the next all Civil Societies, and Governments will be dissolved, and so Nations as Nations can't be there rewarded and punished, and consequently, if we suppose God to be the Judge and Governour of the World, and of all Nations in it, we must conclude that he will take Vengeance on Sinful Nations in this World by severe Judgments, or by a total Destruction.

So that from all this, since Vice or Wickedness is by its necessary effects and consequences, apt to destroy us, since also where it prevails and abounds, it doth as it were Necessitate Almighty God to visit such a People, doth it not evidently follow, that nothing can possibly tend more to their Ruin and Destruction, and consequently that if we would be Happy, we must be Righteous.

And as it is thus in the reason of the thing, considering Vertue and Vice in themselves, and in their necessary, and natural effects and consequences, so I proceed to shew you

III. In the third and last place, That it is so in Fact, that Princes and People are happy or miserable, as they obey or disobey God, as they live virtuously, or wickedly. Of the truth of this the constant experience of all Ages is a sufficient Testimony, if we consult Sacred, or Profane, Ancient, or Modern History, we shall perceive that as Religion

gion or Righteousness hath more or less prevailed among any People, their State hath been more or less peaceable and prosperous. As on the other hand also, that wherever they have thrown off all regard to God, and obedience to what by the light of Nature, or otherwise, they knew to be his Will, where this I say has been general, their destruction has followed immediately upon these two Hinges of Vertue and Vice, the fates of all the great Empires, and famous States that have been in the world have turned. *Omnia prospera eveniunt colentibus Deos, adversa spernentibus, The People that mind Religion are successful in all things, but unsuccessful when they have no regard to it,* saith the Roman Orator. And I appeal to the Observation and Experience of all Histories for the truth of this.

If we go to Profane Histories, tho' they be very imperfect Records of things, yet we shall be able to bring abundance of Instances from them to prove this; there never was seen any Nation or Kingdom, even amongst them, remarkable for Justice, and Temperance, for Sincerity and Fidelity, for Piety and Religion (tho' it was in a wrong way) but it was most Powerful, Great, and Flourishing, most happy, and prosperous; and tho' the Heathens were ignorant of true Religion, yet as little as they knew of it, it always much impaired, or bettered their worldly affairs, as their love, or zeal towards it, did wain or grow: And on the other hand there never was any Nation or Kingdom famous for publick profaness, immoralities, and contempt of Sacred things, but they have become miserable, undergone most direful Calamities, and at last utter desolation has come upon them. I might produce abundance of Testimonies for
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this, but they are needless. I might shew it in the fall and ruine of the *Babylonian* and *Persian*, of the *Grecian* and *Roman* Monarchies. But I will only instance in the *Jews*, whose History is little more than an History of the sins, and vertues of that People, and the dealings of God with them accordingly. In the whole course of their affairs we may perceive that they never found it otherwise; but during their Faith and Fidelity towards God, they were always rewarded with publick Happiness and Prosperity; they either lived in Peace, or their Arms were always successful, or their Land flowed with Milk and Honey. On the other side, if they swerved, and departed from God's Laws, as they often did, they were always punished with publick Judgments, either with some mortal Disease, or the devouring Sword, or a long Captivity. This was so remarkably evident among them, that any one that could but make a right estimate of the Morals of that People, and how they either cleaved to, or forsook the Lord their God, might constantly make a Judgment likewise, how it would fare with them, as to their outward Temporal Affairs. Did not even their most malicious and mortal enemies all acknowledge, that to strive against them it was in vain, as long as their Amity with God continued, and that nothing could weaken them but Apostacy. It is a most remarkable instance which we have of this in the advice which *Achior* the *Ammonite* gave to *Holofernes*, when he came up with an Army against that People, you have the Passage in *Judith* the 5th, from verse 17, &c. *Whilst* (saith he) *they sinned not against their God, they prospered, because the God that hateth iniquity was with them. But when they departed from the way which he appointed them, they were destroyed in many battles*
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very sore, and were led Captives into a Land that was not theirs, and the Temple of their God was cast to the ground, and their Cities were taken by their enemies. But now are they returned to their God, and are come up from the places where they were scattered, and have possessed Jerusalem, where their Sanctuary is. Now therefore, my Lord and Governour, if there be any error in this people, and they sin against their God, let us consider that this shall be their ruine. But if there be no iniquity in their Nation, let my Lord now pass by, least their Lord defend them, and their God be for them, and we become a reproach before all the world.

And now from all that hath been said 'tis most evident that a Prince's and People's Happiness and Prosperity do depend upon their being truly Religious, and consequently that *the Throne is established in righteousness.*

What remains is only to make Application of what hath been said, which I shall do by drawing two or three Inferences from the whole. And

First, Since our Sovereign's, and our Nations Prosperity, and happiness do in so great a measure depend upon our conduct and manners, we may from hence conclude, how much it is the Interest, as well as Duty of us all, in our several Stations and Capacities to betake our selves to a Religious course of Life, in all holiness, and righteousness all our days. 'Tis an unspeakable Blessing that we have a Queen that goes before us, and sets us a glorious Example in her own Life, and Conversation, whose constant and greatest care is to promote the Honour and Service of God, the Fear of Him, and the Practice of Righteousness amongst us. This She has declared to be Her Royal Purpose and Resolu-

tion, so that if we be not an Holy, and consequently an Happy People, She hath nothing to answer for it. She hath delivered Her own Soul, and to our selves only must our Ruin be imputed. Oh! let us think of these things, and let us from this day take up strong, and solemn Resolutions of unfeigned Repentance for our sins past, and of an holy Obedience to our God for the time to come; and let us make such Resolutions good by calling them often to mind, by representing the advantages and rewards of Righteousness, even in this Life, by settling this persuasion in our minds, which hath been this day so fully evinced and proved to us, that our Happiness depends upon our Righteousness, and consequently that it is the Interest of our Nation to be Religious; If the desire of that therefore has any influence upon us, let it sway our affections to Religion; if we love our selves, if we love our Nation, if we love our Queen, if we love our Religion, if we love our Country let us love and practice Righteousness.

Secondly, From what has been said we may learn that our sins have been the true cause of those evils and calamities which have befallen this Nation, it has suffered very great and terrible ones, within the compass of a few years, and it hath been threatned with others no less great and terrible, which God in his Infinite Goodness to us by his all-wise, and over-ruling Providence, in the height of distress, and dispondency, in the very nick of exigency has unexpectedly delivered us from. But I shall not go about to fully the lustre of this day by retailing out to you either the evils we have suffered, or those we have narrowly escaped; but only desire you to consider, that Publick Judgments or Calamities, *do not arise out of the dust*, they are not scattered into the world by the uncertain distribution of blind fate, and im-

improvident contingency, but they come all from the hand of God; that *Vengeance is the Lord's*, and the distribution of Plagues and Judgments is within his own peculiar Jurisdiction, *there's no evil in a City or Kingdom which the Lord does not*; and withal, that God never so visits a Nation, but for their sins, *he does not afflict willingly, nor grive the children of men*, if they sinned not, he would not punish them, but when sin prevails in a Nation, and comes to a *Crisis*, then God as he is the righteous Governour of the World is bound in honour and Justice to punish; and consequently, that if we will not forsake our sins, and reform our lives, we can have no reason to hope to escape Misery, and Ruin, and Desolation. Blessed be God the face of our Heavens is at present as clear and serene, as our hearts can wish, no presaging Clouds of Storms, or tempests, now hang over our heads, but all were dispersed and vanished, when our Sun rose this day in our Horizon, *with healing in her wings*; and yet alas! let us not flatter our selves, and vainly and rashly conclude that *the bitterness of death is now past*; for since the same causes will always produce the same effects, if the same sins continue to reign among us that have hitherto done, we must expect the speedy execution of those Judgments which now seem to be removed, *If we shall still do wickedly, we shall be consumed, both we and our Queen.* Amos 3.6.
Lam. 3.33.
1 Sam. 13.25.

Thirdly and lastly, Let the Doctrine I have now proved to you teach us the best expedient to make us an happy People, which is the Practice of true Religion, and Righteousness. Blessed be God we have the honour to profess, the best Religion, and are Members of the best Church in the world; but for God's sake let us not flatter, and deceive our selves upon this, and vainly think that this will make us Favourites of Heaven,

ven, since we know both from the Nature of God, and the tenor of the whole Scripture, that the Righteous only are his Children, the Objects of his Care and Love, and withal that *he only that doth righteousness is righteous*. So that if in our good Church, and good Religion, vice and iniquity abound, we have nothing to pretend to, to entitle us to the favour and protection of God.

Blessed be God the face of affairs at present look well, and seem to smile upon us, we have a Queen whom we all profess, heartily and unanimously to love, and who I am sure, in a little time hath shewn a great deal of Love and Affection, and sincere Goodwill to us Her People. With what endearing expressions did She evidence Her Love and Affections to us, at Her first coming to the Throne, when She professed Her *heart to be entirely English*, nor has She loved us in word, and in tongue only, but in deed, and in truth, as She has shewn in the care She has taken, and the great things She has done, for the settling us upon the lasting Foundations of Peace and Happiness.

There's nothing which so much threatens Ruin and Desolation to our Nation, as the unhappy, and unreasonable Divisions that are amongst us. This Her Majesty is greatly sensible of, and therefore have often on all occasions, as far as words could do it, expressed Her earnest desires of seeing all Her Subjects, in perfect Peace, and Union among themselves, and She has done all that is in Her Power to effect it. She hath indeed declared that the Church of *England* as by Law established, which She owns She hath had the happiness, and advantage to have had Her Education in, shall be the Object of Her more peculiar

peculiar care and affection. But then this can raise no jealousies in the minds of those who dissent from us, since almost in the same Breath She hath as often declared, that they may *rest secure in their Act of Toleration*. It is greatly to be wished, that all Her Subjects would but in their several Stations, do all that they can on their part, for the promoting this Peace and Union among us, which is so much at Her Majesties Heart, we should then quickly see our Divisions if not totally ended, yet greatly lessened; for would but all those who profess themselves to be of the Church of *England*, and who think they can without sin joyn in all acts of Worship with Her, but constantly do it, and not sometimes afford Her their Companies, and at other times fill the seperate Congregations with them, I am apt to think that our Dissenters would soon become that little Flock they originally were. And it is a very unaccountable thing, that all the Obligations of Peace and Love, of Unity and Concord, and all the sad Consequences which flow from the breach of these, cannot prevail with these men, *constantly* to do that which would promote the former, and consequently prevent the latter, which they make not the least scruple, to do *Occasionally*. There was a time not long since, that a *Church-Papist* was a very odious Character, and fixed upon certain Persons as a Name of Infamy, for this reason I suppose, because they were looked upon as Persons, who tho' they profess'd a love for the Church of *England*, and would join in Worship with Her, yet by their Actions and doings, were judged to be for promoting the interest, and designs of the Papists, and consequently bringing Ruin to the Nation. How unjustly this Character

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was given I shall not stand now to enquire; but only methinks I would fain know, why a *Church-Dissenter*, that is, an *Occasional Conformist*, should not be thought as dangerous a Person, and looked upon as, as odious a Character, as a *Church-Papist*, since we can't but know that the former are as great enemies to the Monarchy and Church of *England*, as the latter, as is most plain from hence, that the latter have indeed attempted the Ruin of both, but not effected it, whereas the former have both attempted, and succeeded in it, so that what we have only feared from the Papists, we have felt from the Dissenters, and I am much mistaken if our greatest and justest fears are not at present from that Quarter. They therefore who think the one an odious Character, ought for the same reason to avoid the imputation of the other.

But to proceed, As Her Majesty hath done all that She can to promote Peace and Unity among us, so hath She been equally careful to maintain the Honour, and true Interest of the Nation. For this she has promoted only Persons of known Ability, and Fidelity to their Country to highest Posts of Trust and Honour; For this *She* has given large supplies out of her own Purse, for carrying on that chargeable War She is engaged in; for this, *She* has applied to the best, and most serviceable uses, what Her Subjects have given Her, and to prevent abuses and mismanagements in applying the necessary Taxes, She is not only willing, but has requested that the Publick Accounts may be inspected.

And Lastly, as to Her care for maintaining the Honour, Dignity, and Establishment of the Church of *England*, if any thing hitherto hath been unsuccessful, which hath been thought proper for the promoting

moting these, and transmitting them down securely to Posterity, 'tis surely with the greatest Injustice, if any one lays it at Her door, for the encouragement and maintenance of this Church, in these respects, hath most visibly been Her particular care, since on all occasions of Promotions to any Ecclesiastical Dignity which have hitherto happened, She hath made good Her Royal Promise from the Throne, She has had a very just regard to such as have been eminent, and remarkable for their Piety, Learning, and constant Zeal for this Church, and who as at present they are an Ornament to the Church, so we may undoubtedly rely upon *them* to do all *they* can in their Spheres to fix it upon such Foundations, as that it shall be beyond either the Power, or Policy of its enemies ever to undermine or throw it down.

But of all the great, and glorious things, which Her Majesty has done for this Church, of which She is so deservedly the Head, next under Christ, 'tis none of the least, and which we of the Clergy are more peculiarly bound with the greatest gratitude to acknowledge, is that unprecedented Bounty of giving up all Her Right to the First Fruits and Tenths, towards the augmenting the small Revenues of the poor Clergy. *She* is sensible that it concerns God's Honour, that the good of the Church, and that the equity and reason of the thing requires, that God's Ministers should be provided for, and set in a degree above a State of Scorn and infamy, the almost necessary consequence of Poverty; nor does *She* think it any indecency, that a Levite should prosper, and enjoy a plentiful Portion of Temporal good things.

I know not whether I may take leave without
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Offence upon this Occasion to Offer, what the Honour of God and Religion puts me upon, and which shall embolden me to do it, and if it should prove an Offence to any, yet I promise my self it will not be so to you to whom I am now going to address my self, and that is, to recommend this truly pious and Christian Example of your Sovereign to you Her Vice-gerents the Magistrates of this City. Let me beseech you to consider whether the mean Provision for the Clergy amongst you does not equally deserve your serious thoughts. You profess a zealous concern and affection for the Church of *England*, and your sincerity in it, is not I think to be the least questioned, but how I beseech you, Can you better express it than in maintaining the honour of it, and how Can its honour be better secured than in encouraging those, who are the more immediate Patrons and defenders of it, to a chearful performance of their duty. 'Tis not vast revenues, nor great Incomes that we crave, but only a competent Subsistence, in some manner answerable to our honourable, and painful employment. *The Labourer is worthy of his hire*; but our hire alone, or our Wages, as they are usually called, are for the most part scarce sufficient to supply us with convenient accommodations, or to keep us from want and penury. Your City is populous, and consequently our charge is great, laborious and painful; and yet how many Parishes are there amongst you, which do not raise so much for their Minister a year, as an ordinary Journey-man in most Servile Trades is able to bring in? Besides, how little is it of what we have that we can call our own? since we depend altogether for it, upon the arbitrary benevolences of Men, which is at best, as the learned

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ed Dr. Barrow stiles it, but *a more plausible way of beggary*. I might greatly enlarge on this Subject, but as I said, my design is only humbly to recommend this to your serious and Christian Considerations. I Bless God that I can say to you as St. Paul said to his *Philippians*, that *I speak not in respect of want*; but what I have said is truly out of an affection for the Sacred Order of the Ministry it self, of which I have the honour to be a Member, tho' a very unworthy, and inconsiderable one, which suffers in what its Members suffer. I will only add with the same St. Paul, *I speak not because I desire a Gift, or any benefit to myself, but because I desire fruit that may abound to your account in the day of the Lord*, Phil. 4. 17.

In a word, to conclude all, since we are this day blessed with a Queen truly Christian and Religious, and *She* with a dutiful and obedient People, since we are blessed with an Established Church, truly Primitive and Orthodox, and this Church is blessed with as Pious and Learned a Clergy, as is at this day in the world; as we value these Blessings, and desire the continuance of them, let us be prevailed with to live holy and vertuous lives in all Godliness, and honesty, let us fear God, honour and obey the Queen, love our Neighbour, mind our own private Duties, and carry ourselves as become Christians, in all our several Relations we stand in to other men, so shall we make God our Friend, and become hearty Friends to one another, so shall we establish the Throne of our Sovereign, and make our selves a truly happy People.

F I N I S.

